TREE SPRING PIPELINE REROUTE
Environmental Assessment (EA)
DOI-BLM-OR-V060-2014-007

Vale District Bureau of Land Management
100 Oregon Street
Vale, OR 97918

April, 2014

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1 Background Information

In July, 2012, lightning ignited the Long Draw Fire which burned public land administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). This fire damaged portions of a rangeland development project known as the Tree Spring Pipeline (#725225). The pipeline was fire damaged because portions of the pipe were not buried because those portions of the route were located in areas of very shallow soil over bedrock. It damaged a section of the pipeline that traverses into the Winter Area North pasture consisting of approximately 2.2 miles. The trough at the end of the pipeline, T34S, R42E, Sec. 31, supplies water to livestock and wildlife in the Eiguren allotment (#011305). This is one of only two watering sites within the Winter Area North (4,482 acres) pasture. See the attached Map #1 for the location of the entire Tree Spring water pipeline system (pipeline and troughs).

The BLM received a request from the holder of the livestock grazing permit to reroute a portion of the pipeline within the Eiguren Allotment. See Map #2 for the location of the pipeline proposed to be built (1.5 miles) and the portion proposed to be abandoned (2.2miles).

2 Proposed Action

The proposed action is to reroute a portion of the Tree Spring Pipeline that was destroyed in the 2012 Long Draw fire to a more desirable location where the soils are well drained which would allow for the pipeline to be buried. The reroute will be approximately 1.5 miles long within T34S, R42E, Sec. 31 and T35S, R42E, Sec. 05 and Sec. 06. The proposed action would disturb approximately 1.5 acres and rehabilitate approximately 2.2 acres. This project includes rerouting of an existing pipeline but no new troughs will be added. The pipe will be black polypropylene 1.5 to 2.0 inches in diameter that will be buried to a depth of 18 inches. The pipeline will be buried using a caterpillar-type tractor with a ripper tooth. The width of the disturbance will be eight feet wide or the approximate width of the caterpillar. The disturbed area will be seeded to crested wheatgrass (*Agropyron cristatum*), after the pipeline is installed.

The proposed action also abandons the existing 2.2 mile pipeline. This is the same pipeline described in the No Action alternative which is to be maintained or rebuilt. The disturbance caused during installation of the existing pipeline has healed or recovered to a point where it is unnoticeable in many locations. In those areas where it continues to be noticeable, rehabilitation will occur. This includes picking up the old, damaged, exposed pipe, seeding barren areas and placement of rocks along the pipeline route to discourage driving the route.

3 Purpose of and Need for the Action

The purpose of this proposal is to supply water for livestock and wildlife to an existing trough located in the Winter Area North pasture of the Eiguren allotment. The need for the action is to relocate the pipeline to reduce maintenance costs and eliminate the potential damages by wildfire and the negative effects of the sun's ultra-violet radiation on unburied pipe.

4 Conformance with the Land Use Plan

The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable LUP, Southeastern Oregon Resource Management Plan (SEORMP), 2002, because it is specifically provided for on page 59 stating,

"Rangeland/Grazing Use: A combination of administrative solutions and rangeland project development will be implemented, as necessary, on site-specific basis to provide a sustained level of livestock use while maintaining resource values. Livestock grazing systems will be retained or revised through the adaptive management process to meet management objectives. Structural rangeland projects will be implemented to facilitate meeting resource management objectives rather than making additional forage available."

On page S-2 it further states, "Standard Implementation Features and Procedures: Normal maintenance of existing projects and new projects will occur, as consistent with original design, through the life of the plan in order to support authorized uses of public land."

5 Alternatives Including the Proposed Action

The objective of alternative actions is to provide comparison of environmental effects and effects to the human environment of a range of management options which could meet the purpose and need.

5.1 Alternative 1: No Action

The no action alternative would maintain the pipeline in its current location. Fire damaged a portion of the pipeline because the pipe was not buried. The unburied pipe is located in areas of very shallow soil over bedrock. Because the pipe has been damaged by fire and it is greater than 40 years old and well beyond its life expectancy, the entire pipeline (approximately 2.2miles) would be rebuilt.

5.2 Alternative 2: (Proposed Action) Reroute the pipeline

The proposed action is to reroute the existing 2.2 miles of the Tree Spring Pipeline that supplies water to the Winter Area North pasture (see Map 1). This will be more cost beneficial to the permittee because the newly rerouted pipeline would be shorter and therefore maintenance would be for 1.5 miles as compared to 2.2 miles. Also, the pipe in its new location can easily be buried which would shelter the pipe from damages caused by future wildfires and the effects of the sun (ultra-violet radiation) on the unburied polypropylene pipe.

5.3 Project Design Features for all alternatives

- Disturbed areas will be rehabilitated by seeding them to crested wheatgrass which will reduce the opportunity for noxious weed establishment. Seed will be certified weed free.
- During surface-disturbing construction and maintenance activities, the livestock grazing permit holder shall ensure that all construction equipment and vehicles are cleaned of all vegetation (stems, leaves, seeds and all other vegetative parts) prior to entering public lands in order to minimize the transport and spread of noxious weeds. During surface-disturbing construction and maintenance activities, the holder shall ensure that all construction equipment and vehicles are cleaned of all vegetation (stems, leaves, seeds and all other vegetative parts) prior to leaving public lands in areas that are known by the Authorized Officer of the BLM to be infested with noxious weeds.

- After implementation of the proposed action, the project area will be monitored for noxious weeds for a period of three years and if found will be treated.

- All abandoned material will be removed and salvaged or disposed of.

6 Affected Environment

This section presents relevant resource components of the existing environment which constitute baseline information.

6.1 Recreation and Visual Resources

Outdoor recreation around the Tree Spring Pipeline area consists primarily of day use for hunting purposes. This site is remote. Exploration activities include pleasure driving of off highway vehicles, hunting of upland birds and big game animals, wildlife viewing, rock hounding, hiking, and horseback riding. Visual resources management (VRM) classification of the recreation site and surrounding area is class IV. The objectives of VRM Class IV are as follows:

- Provide for management activities that require major modification of the landscape. These management activities may dominate the view and become the focus of viewer attention. However, every effort should be made to minimize the impact of these projects by carefully locating activities, minimizing disturbance, and designing the projects to conform to the characteristic landscape. (RMP at J-1)

6.2 Wilderness Study Areas (WSA)

The project area lies outside and is not adjacent to any WSAs. As a result, no further analysis of potential impacts to WSAs from actions considered will be completed.

6.3 Wilderness Characteristics

The project area lies outside and is not adjacent to lands with wilderness characteristics. As a result, no further analysis of potential impacts to wilderness characteristics from actions considered will be completed.

6.4 Cultural and Paleontological Resources

Cultural resource inventories are required by the BLM's 2002 Southeastern Oregon Resource Management Plan as directed by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended mandates Federal agencies to protect and preserve prehistoric and historic cultural properties that are eligible or potentially eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. Adherence to the regulations for implementing the National Historic Preservation Act insures that significant cultural resources are identified prior to project implementation and that project effects are identified and either avoided through project redesign or mitigated in consultation with the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

Initially, a pre-survey file search was conducted by Cheryl Bradford, Acting District Archaeologist with the intent of gathering information on previously identified cultural resources and/or properties of traditional religious and/or cultural importance within the proposed Tree Spring Pipeline Reroute area. No pertinent cultural documentation was located for this "Area of Proposed Effects" (APE). A through field reconnaissance of this APE was completed on February 27, 2014, with the objective of locating, recording, and evaluating any physical evidence of historical significance. The field survey consisted of a pedestrian cultural resource inventory of 100 percent of the APE the results; no sites were located.

6.5 Soils and Watershed Resources

Soils

No soil survey data are available through the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS); however, soil data are available from the BLM through a fourth order soil survey. The soils found in the area of the proposed project were surveyed and described in Oregon's Long Range Requirements for Water 1969, Appendix I-11, and Owyhee Drainage Basin. Major soils found in the area are listed below.

The proposed action occurs within soil Units 55, 75 and S75. Unit 55 soils are shallow, loamy, well drained soils with cemented pans. These soils occur on very extensive to moderately steep old fans and high terrace remnants. Unit 75 soils are loamy, shallow, very stony, well drained soils over basalt, rhyolite, or welded tuff. They occur on gently undulating to rolling lava plateaus and some very steep faulted and dissected terrain. Unit S75 soils are shallow, loamy, well drained, extremely stony soil on gently undulating to rolling plateaus of basalt, rhyolite, or welded tuff. Erosion risk in all three units is low to medium with an annual precipitation of 8-11 inches.

Watershed Resources

The project area is located in the Crooked-Rattlesnake Hydrologic Subbasin, 4th –field HUC number 17050109. The watershed encompasses approximately 834,510 acres and 1,954 stream miles according to Table 2-9, page 55 and Map HYDR-3M in the SEORMP (USDI, 2002). Bull Creek, which is an intermittent channel flowing primarily during spring run-off and precipitation events, occurs within the proposed action. There are no perennial surface waters or riparian zones within or immediately adjacent to the proposed action

6.6 Vegetation

The dominate species in the area around Tree Spring Pipeline in the Winter Area North pasture has been seeded to crested wheatgrass and is considered a good to excellent seeding. Other species may include minor components of Sandberg bluegrass (*Poa secunda*), Squirreltail (*Elymus elymoides*), and Cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*).

6.7 Special Status Plant Species

A search of the BLM Special Status Plant Species database, GeoBOB, was conducted on December 4, 2013. There are no known sites of special status plant species in or adjacent to the project area, the nearest location of a sensitive plant is 15 miles to the south of the project area. The project is not located within the range of any federally listed Threatened or Endangered plant. The likely hood of presence of a special status species in the project area is low because the majority of the project area is a crested wheatgrass seeding that was seeded in 1996 and again in 2008 and there are no sites of special status species in or adjacent to the project area. Additionally, the disturbance width of the project is 8 feet which is unlikely to extirpate a sensitive plant population if it were to be present. As a result, no further analysis of potential impacts to special status plants from actions considered will be completed.

6.8 Noxious Weeds

There are no known noxious weeds located along the existing or proposed pipeline routes.

6.9 Wildlife and Neotropical Migrant Birds

A wintering herd of pronghorn antelope is known to use this area in the late fall and winter.

The Winter Area North pasture, because it is an existing crested wheatgrass seeding, is not considered to be a habitat issue of concern for any of the neotropical migrant birds. As a result, no further analysis of potential impacts to neotropical migrant birds from actions considered will be completed.

The proposed project area traverses approximately .4 of a mile of Preliminary General Habitat for Greater sage-grouse (see Map 2). The closest Greater Sage-Grouse lek is the Bull Creek lek, which is 1.1 miles east of the proposed pipeline route. The habitat surrounding this lek was destroyed in the Long Draw fire. In an effort to rehabilitate the Long Draw fire, this area was seeded to crested wheatgrass. This area was originally seeded in 1965 as part of the Vale Project. The Bull Creek lek was visited on numerous occasions in 2005 and 2013 and no sage-grouse were documented. No sage-grouse have been counted on or near the lek since 1999.

6.10 Wild Horses

No wild horse herd management areas are within the vicinity of the Tree Spring pipeline reroute. As a result, no further analysis of potential impacts to wild horses from actions considered will be completed.

6.11 Livestock Grazing

The Eiguren Allotment (11305) is an individual allotment with an active grazing preference of 5,799 active animal unit months (AUMs). The season of use is from 03/05 to 11/30. Livestock grazing will not change as a result of the proposed or alternative actions. As a result, no further analysis of potential impacts to livestock grazing from actions considered will be completed.

6.12 Climate/Topography

The Eiguren Allotment is composed of rolling hills, shrub-steppe rims and deep rocky canyons along the major watercourses. Elevations within the allotment range from approximately 4,450 feet to 5,300 feet. Semi-desert shrub-steppe vegetation communities result from cold winters and hot dry summers. The long term average annual precipitation is between 10 and 14 inches, dependent on elevation, aspect, and typical storm tracks. Precipitation occurs primarily as snow fall during the winter with occasional mid-summer thunderstorms. The proposed action does not increase or decrease the active AUMs on the Allotment therefore there is no need to analyze greenhouse gas emission levels. Climate would not be affected by the "no action" Alternative 1, the proposed action Alternative 2, or Alternative 3. No further analysis of climate will be completed.

6.13 Mandatory Elements

The following elements of the human environment are subject to requirements specified in statute, regulation, or executive order and must be considered in all EA's and EIS's:

Element	Relevant Authority	BLM Manual	
Air Quality	The Clean Air Act as amended (42 USC 7401 et seq.)	MS 7300	Not affected
Areas of Critical Environmental Concern	Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 USC 1701 et seq.)	MS 1617	Not present
Cultural Resources	National Historic Preservation Act as amended (16 USC 470)	MS 8100	Not present
Farm Lands (prime or unique)	Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (30 USC 1201 et seq.)		Not present
Floodplains	E.O. 11988, as amended, Floodplain Management, 5/24/77	MS 7260	Not present
Native American Religious Concerns	American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 (42 USC 1996)	MS 8100	Not present

Element	Relevant Authority	BLM Manual	
Threatened or Endangered Species	Endangered Species Act of 1973 as amended (16 USC 1531)	MS 6840	Not present; impacts to special status species analyzed in this document.
Wastes, Hazardous or Solid	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 (42 USC 6901 et seq.) Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 as amended (42 USC 9615)	MS 9180 MS 9183	Not present nor would any be generated by the proposed action or alternatives. Stipulations of any contract awarded to complete actions considered would include actions to preclude hazardous wastes.
Water Quality Drinking/Ground	Safe Drinking Water Act as amended (42 USC 300f et seq.) Clean Water Act of 1977 (33 USC 1251 et seq.)	MS 7240 MS 9184	Not present
Wetlands/Riparian Zones	E.O. 11990, Protection of Wetlands, of May 24, 1977	MS 6740	Not present
Wild and Scenic Rivers	Wild and Scenic Rivers Act as amended (16 USC 1271)	MS 8014	Not present
Wilderness and Wilderness Study Areas	Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 USC 1701 et seq.) Wilderness Act of 1964 (16 USC 1131 et seq.)	MS 8500	Not present
Environmental Justice	E.O. 12898 of February 11, 1994		Minority populations and low income populations would not be affected by actions considered.
Actions to Expedite Energy Related Projects	E.O. 13212 of May 18, 2001		The actions considered are not energy related nor would they affect production, transmission, or conservation of energy.

Elements not present or not affected will not be further analyzed within this environmental assessment.

7 Environmental Consequences

This chapter is organized by alternatives to illustrate the differences between the "no action" alternative and the action alternatives.

7.1 Alternative 1: (No Action Alternative)

7.1.1 **Recreation and Visual Resources**

Activities such as rebuilding pipelines are activities allowed in VRM Class IV lands. The no action alternative would not impact recreational activities in the area.

7.1.2 **Cultural and Paleontological Resources**

Implementation of the No Action Alternative will not; directly or indirectly affect cultural resources as a result of the field reconnaissance identifying no cultural sites existing in the APE.

7.1.3 **Soils and Watershed Resources**

Under the No Action Alternative, impacts to the Soil and Watershed Resources are isolated to those areas immediately adjacent to and from maintaining the pipeline. These impacts are very minor and less than 2.2 acres within the 834,510 acre Crooked-Rattlesnake Subbasin.

7.1.4 **Vegetation**

The no action alternative would continue current activities within the area and result in no anticipated change in vegetation communities. Approximately 2.2 acres of crested wheatgrass would be negatively impacted as a result of rebuilding or maintaining the pipeline in its existing location.

7.1.5 **Noxious Weeds**

The No Action alternative would provide an opportunity for new ground disturbance that can provide opportunities for weed invasion along the 2.2 mile pipeline route. Project Design Features (PDFs) that reseed the disturbed area with certified weed free seed to reduce the opportunity for noxious weed establishment; require cleaning of ground disturbing equipment before entering BLM lands; and monitoring and treating noxious weeds along the re-route for three years would reduce the risk of introduction of noxious weeds to this project.

7.1.6 **Wildlife**

The area adjacent to the pipeline is dominated with crested wheatgrass with very few understory species present. Consequently wildlife species diversity is limited. Some disturbance to wildlife could occur adjacent to the 2.2 mile pipeline as it is rebuilt or maintained. Pronghorn antelope are known to use the area in the late fall and winter or at a time when maintenance is unlikely.

Sage-grouse are not likely utilizing the project area within PGH, due to the altered habitat as a result of fire and/or historical range improvements. The closest recorded Greater Sage-Grouse lek is the Bull Creek Lek, which is 1.1 miles east of the trough on the Tree Spring pipeline in the Bull Creek Seeding where the new pipe will be ripped. Most recent information shows this lek being inactive over the last 14 years. Washington Office IM No. 2012-043 does not preclude the livestock grazing permit holder from maintaining this pipeline. However, due to proximity of this lek site it is recommended to have no equipment or staging of equipment near in T35S, R42E, Sec 04.

Impacts to wildlife would be very limited under the no action alternative. However, it would be a rebuild of 2.2 miles versus the alternative of rerouting the pipeline to 1.5 mile using a shorter route.

7.2 Alternative 2: (Proposed Action) Reroute the Tree Spring Pipeline

7.2.1 **Recreation and Visual Resources**

The construction of a livestock watering pipeline is an activity allowed in VRM Class IV lands.

This alternative would not impact recreational activities in the area.

- Direct effects- no known effects
- Indirect effects- no known effects
- Cumulative Effects- There are no known past actions in the project area. There are no known actions occurring during the period of this prosed action, therefore there are no effects from present actions. There are no known reasonably foreseeable future actions

7.2.2 **Cultural and Paleontological Resources**

Based upon the absence of cultural sites in the APE this alternative would not impact cultural and paleontological resources in this area.

- Direct effects- no known effects
- Indirect effects- no known effects
- Cumulative Effects-
    - Past actions- Prior to establishment of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976; BLM activities occurred with little analysis of cultural resource impacts. Adverse effects occurred from livestock grazing, irrigation development, and dispersed recreation. Little effort was made to deter private collection of historic or prehistoric artifacts and losses of cultural resources were extensive in certain locations. The adoption and enforcement of federal cultural resource protection legislation and regulations over the past 38 years has reduced the rate of cultural resource deterioration.
    - Present actions- Presently, it is unlikely that the combination of other BLM activities such as: permitted domestic grazing, recreational use, vegetation treatments, roads and wildfires combined with the proposed action, will not affect cultural sites as a result of; no cultural sites being present. However, if any such effects are identified, re-initiation of the SHPO consultation process will occur, and appropriate avoidance or moderating measures will be developed.
    - Reasonably foreseeable actions- there are no known reasonably foreseeable future actions.

7.2.3 **Soils and Watershed Resources**

Disturbed soils would be subject to increased wind and water erosion during construction activity, and would result in effects such as soil displacement, erosion, loss of moisture holding capacity, loss of micro biotic soil forming processes, and increased runoff potential. Soil productivity and soil forming processes on approximately 1.5 acres would be altered until the disturbed area is seeded and re-vegetated. Upon successful completion of stabilization and rehabilitation, soil erosion and associated disturbances would be localized and short term. The existing route of approximately 2.2 acres would also be rehabilitated and seeded at the completion of the project.

- Direct effects- disturbance to the surface and the subsurface during construction.
- Indirect effects- no known effects
- Cumulative Effects-
    - Past actions- seeded to Crested Wheatgrass
    - Present actions- no known actions occurring during the period of this prosed action, therefore there are no effects from present actions.
    - Reasonably foreseeable actions- there are no known reasonably foreseeable future actions.

7.2.4 **Vegetation**

The proposed action would disturb approximately 1.5 acres and rehabilitate approximately 2.2 acres. Crested wheatgrass would continue to be the dominant vegetative species in the area.

- Direct effects- disturbance to the surface during construction.
- Indirect effects- no known effects
- Cumulative Effects-
    - Past actions- seeded to Crested Wheatgrass
    - Present actions- no known actions occurring during the period of this prosed action, therefore there are no effects from present actions.
    - Reasonably foreseeable actions- there are no known reasonably foreseeable future actions.

7.2.5 **Noxious Weeds**

Alternative 2 proposes a 1.5 mile pipeline reroute. This would create new ground disturbance that can provide opportunities for weed invasion along the disturbed area. Project Design Features (PDFs) that reseed the disturbed area with certified weed free seed, require cleaning of ground disturbing equipment before entering BLM lands, and monitoring and treating noxious weeds along the re-route for three years would reduce the risk of introduction of noxious weeds to this project. Additionally there are no known populations of noxious weeds along or directly adjacent to the proposed re-route. The No Action Alternative and Alternative 2 both have a low risk of noxious weed introduction due to PDFs, but Alternative 2 proposes 0.5 miles less ground disturbance. The less ground disturbed the lower the risk of noxious weed introduction, hence Alternative 2 poses slightly lower risk of noxious weed introduction over the No Action Alternative.

- Direct effects- disturbance to the surface during construction can provide opportunities for weed invasion.
- Indirect effects- no known effects
- Cumulative Effects-
    - Past actions- seeded to Crested Wheatgrass
    - Present actions- no known actions occurring during the period of this prosed action, therefore there are no effects from present actions.
    - Reasonably foreseeable actions- the disturbed area will be reseeded with certified weed free seed.

7.2.6 **Wildlife**

Migratory Birds

Migratory birds are not present in the project area and will not be affected.

- Direct effects- no known effects
- Indirect effects- no known effects
- Cumulative Effects- There are no known past actions in the project area. There are no known actions occurring during the period of this prosed action, therefore there are no effects from present actions. There are no known reasonably foreseeable future actions

Wildlife

The area adjacent to the pipeline is dominated with crested wheatgrass with very few understory species present. Consequently wildlife species diversity is limited. Some disturbance to wildlife could occur adjacent to and along the proposed 1.5 mile pipeline route as it is constructed or maintained. Pronghorn antelope are known to use the area in the late fall and winter or at a time when maintenance or construction is unlikely.

Sage-grouse are not likely utilizing the project area within PGH, due to the altered habitat as a result of fire and/or historical range improvements. The closest recorded Greater Sage-Grouse lek is the Bull Creek Lek, which is 1.1 miles east of the trough on the Tree Spring pipeline in the Bull Creek Seeding where the new pipe will be ripped. Most recent information shows this lek being inactive over the last 14 years. Washington Office IM No. 2012-043 does not preclude us from maintaining this pipeline. However, due to proximity of this lek site it is recommended to have no equipment or staging of equipment near in T35S R42E Sec 04.

Impacts to wildlife would be very limited but less than the alternative to rebuild the existing pipeline.

- Direct effects- no known effects
- Indirect effects- no known effects
- Cumulative Effects-
    - Past actions- Seeded to Crested Wheatgrass. Most recent information shows this lek being inactive over the last 14 years.
    - Present actions- no known actions occurring during the period of this prosed action, therefore there are no effects from present actions.
    - Reasonably foreseeable actions- there are no known reasonably foreseeable future actions.

7.2.7 **Livestock Grazing**

The proposed action alternative would continue the current situation for livestock grazing. Therefore, this alternative would have no effect on livestock grazing.

- Direct effects- no known effects
- Indirect effects- no known effects
- Cumulative Effects- There are no known past actions in the project area. There are no known actions occurring during the period of this prosed action, therefore there are no effects from present actions. There are no known reasonably foreseeable future actions

7.4 Best Management Practices (BMP's) and Standard Implementation Features and Procedures (SIFP's)

Best management practices (Appendix O, SEORMP/ROD) are those land and resource management techniques designed to maximize beneficial results and minimize negative impacts of management actions. Standard Implementation Features and Procedures (Appendix S, SEORMP/ROD) are design elements which have been standardized over time to mitigate impacts encountered during rangeland improvement installation. The BMPs as well as SIFPs will be followed when maintaining or constructing livestock watering pipelines.

8 List of Preparers

Marcy Tiffany	Range
Todd Allai	Soil, Water, Air
Lynne Silva	Weeds
Susan Fritts	Botany/T&E Plants
Megan McGuire	Wildlife/Fisheries
Cheryl Bradford	Archeology
Joshua Travers	Recreation/WSR/Wilderness/VRM
Brent Grasty	NEPA Compliance and Planning
Thomas "Pat" Ryan	Field Manager

9 List of Agencies, Organizations, and Persons to Whom Copies of the EA are Made Available

Richmar LLC
Crooked Creek LLC
The Vale District Interested Publics List

10 Literature Cited

USDI-BLM. 2002. Southeastern Oregon Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision. U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Vale District, Oregon. 1 v.

BLM's Greater Sage-Grouse Interim management Policies and Procedures (IM 2012-043)

BLM's A Report on National Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Measures developed by the BLM's National Technical Team on Greater Sage-Grouse (NTT Report December 2011).

USDA-BLM Washington Office Instruction Memorandum No. 2012-043. Greater Sage-Grouse Interim Management Policies and Procedures.

11 Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)

Background

The FONSI is a document that explains the reasons why an action will not have a significant effect on the human environment and why, therefore, an environmental impact statement will not be required (40 CFR 1508.13). This FONSI is a stand-alone document but is attached to the EA and incorporates the EA by reference. The FONSI does not constitute the authorizing document: the decision of record is the authorizing document.

"Significance" as used in NEPA requires considerations of both context and intensity (40 CFR 1508.27). For context, significance varies with the setting of the proposed action. For a site-specific action, significance would usually depend upon the effects in the locale rather than in the world as a whole. For this proposed action and alternatives, the effects are confined to the immediate area around the Tree Spring pipeline reroute. For this reason, the analysis of effects is in the context of this site. These effects are described and analyzed in the EA.

Intensity refers to the severity of effect. The BLM would conduct the actions described using the BMPs referenced in the EA and limiting effects to the immediate vicinity of the water delivery pipeline.

The action being proposed is to reroute an existing (destroyed) water delivery pipeline as needed. It was determined that an EA was necessary to evaluate the potential environmental impacts associated with this proposed action.

The NEPA process is intended to help public officials make decisions that are based on understanding of environmental consequences and take actions that protect, restore, and/or enhance the environment (43 CFR 1500.1 (c)). The EA prepared for this action analyzes the environmental consequences of providing a water delivery pipeline.

The Tree Spring pipeline reroute does not lie within areas identified in a citizen's proposal as possessing wilderness characteristics, and the BLM has determined that no wilderness characteristics are present within the boundaries of the Tree Spring pipeline reroute.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Any land management action involving ground disturbance invariably, and by definition, entails environmental effects. BLM has determined based upon the analysis of environmental impacts contained in the referenced EA (DOI-BLM-OR-V060-2014-007), that the potential impacts resulting from the proposed action would not be significant and that, therefore, preparation of an environmental impact statement is not required.

I find that the project's affected region is localized and the effects of implementation are relevant to compliance with existing land use plans. There would be no adverse societal or regional impacts and significant adverse impacts to the environment. I have evaluated the environmental effects, together with the proposed mitigating measures, against the tests of significance found at 40 CFR 1508.27. Although not a condition of my determination, implementation of all Best Management Practices (BMP) of the proposed project would be critical to the success of the action.

I have determined the following:

1. The proposed action would cause no significant impacts, either beneficial or adverse; all impacts would be insignificant; most would be of short duration (1-2 months). The area disturbed by rerouting the pipeline will be 1.5 miles in length and eight foot wide (the width of the caterpillar tractor). The remaining visible portions of the abandoned pipeline will be rehabilitated where it is needed.

2. The proposed action would have no adverse effect on public health and safety.

3. The proposed action would not affect unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, or ecologically critical areas.

4. The proposed action would have no highly controversial effects.

5. The proposed action would have no uncertain effects and would not involve unique or unknown risks.

6. The proposed action would not establish a precedent for future actions and is only related to further development or other actions considered by the BLM at Tree Spring Pipeline. Cumulative impacts of the proposed action and foreseeable further development are not significant.

7. The proposed action would have no adverse effect to scientific, cultural, or historical resources, including any property listed on or potentially eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

8. The proposed action would not significantly adversely affect any endangered or threatened species or any habitat critical to an endangered or threatened species as a result of distance from known locations of special status plant species and limitations to the seasonality of construction activity outside critical periods of raptor nesting. Because there is no habitat that will support endangered or threatened species in the area.

9. The proposed action does not violate any Federal, State, or local law or requirements\ imposed for the protection of the environment.

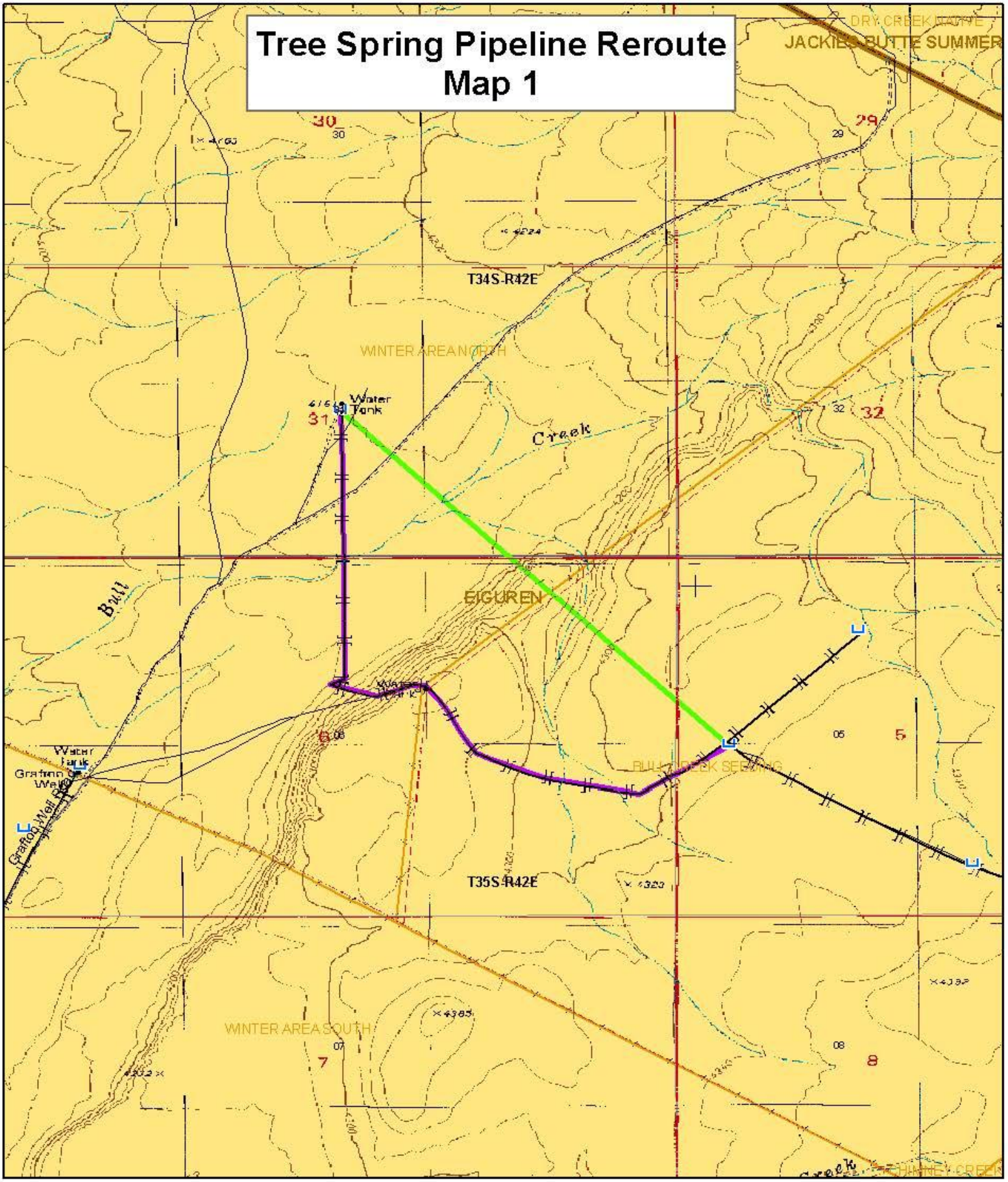
The proposed action to reroute a portion of the Tree Spring Pipeline is consistent with the Southern Oregon Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision (2002).

_____ _____

Thomas Patrick (Pat) Ryan Date
Jordan/Malheur Field Manager
Vale District BLM

12 MAPS:

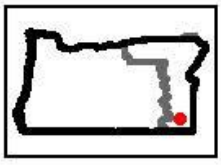
Tree Spring Pipeline Reroute
Map 1



Legend

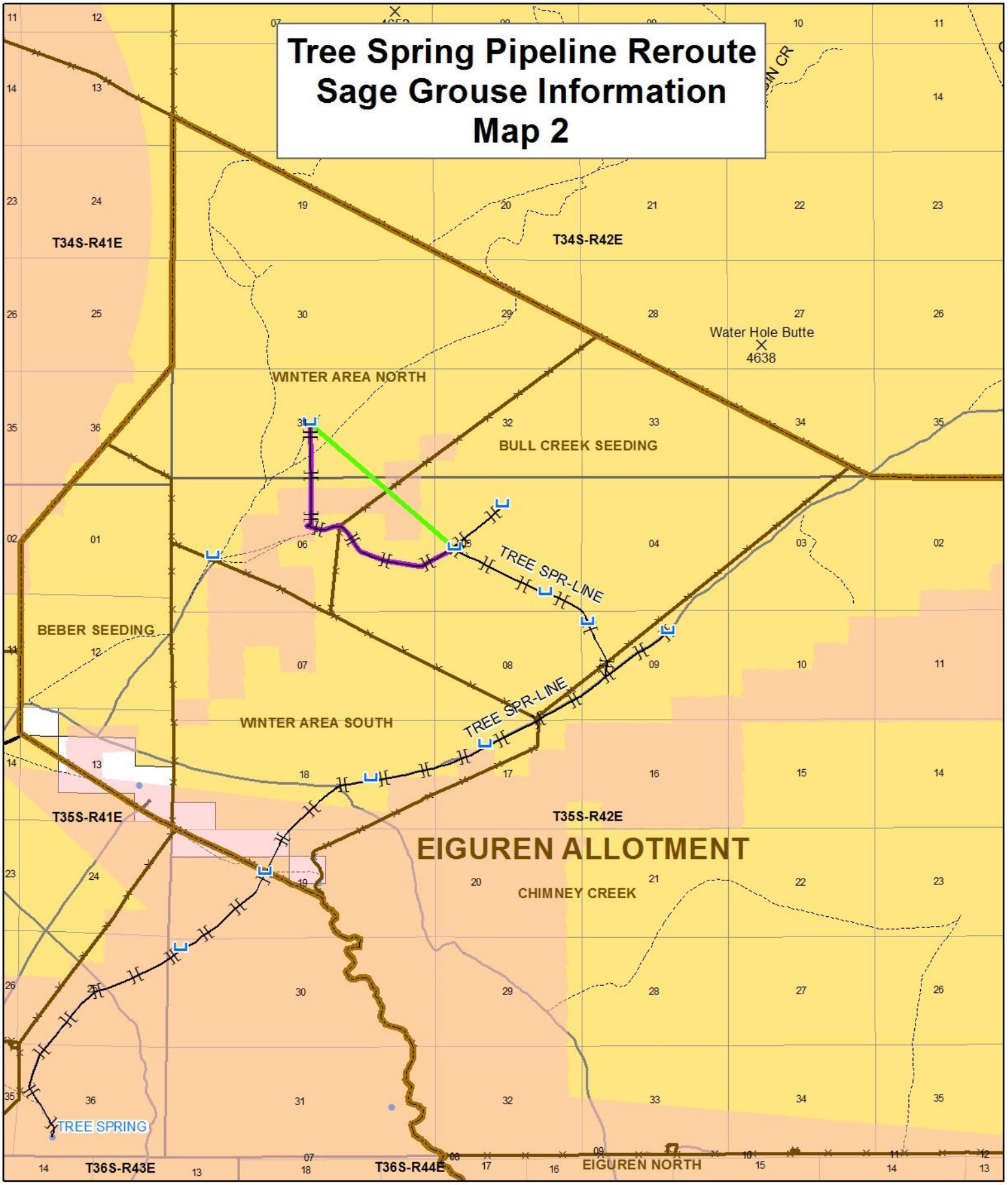
- Alternative
- Proposed Action
- Pipelines
- Troughs
- WaterPoints
- County route
- Bureau of Land Management
- == Forest Service
- --- Private road (no symbol)
- Not Known
- Allotment
- Pasture
- Bureau of Land Management
- Private

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

Vale District
October 30, 2013


Tree Spring Pipeline Reroute
Sage Grouse Information
Map 2
T34S-R41E
T34S-R42E
Water Hole Butte
4638
WINTER AREA NORTH
BULL CREEK SEEDING
TREE SPR-LINE
BEBER SEEDING
WINTER AREA SOUTH
TREE SPR-LINE
T35S-R41E
T35S-R42E
EIGUREN ALLOTMENT
CHIMNEY CREEK
TREE SPRING
T36S-R43E
T36S-R44E
EIGUREN NORTH
Legend
Troughs
Pipelines
Alternative
Proposed Action
Allotment
Pasture
Preliminary General Habitat (PGH)
County route
Bureau of Land Management
Not Known
Bureau of Land Management
Private
0 0.5 1 2 Miles
U.S. Department of Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Vale District
November 12, 2013